



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : *Merchant, et al.*
Serial No. : 09/625,644
Filed : July 26, 2000
Title : MIDDLE-EAR IMPLANT

Art Unit : 3738
Examiner : D. Isabella

D3
#9/A
10-7

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

RESPONSE AND AMENDMENT

In response to the office action mailed on May 30, 2002, the response period for which is extended until October 30, 2002 by the accompanying petition for extension of time, please amend the claims and consider the remarks below.

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In the claims:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 21, and 22 to read as follows:

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1. (Amended) An implant for implantation in a middle-ear chamber, said implant comprising:

a pliant membrane formed into a balloon, said balloon configured to fit within said middle-ear chamber and to contact an eardrum, said pliant membrane forming a balloon having an equivalent volume selected to permit said eardrum to respond to incident acoustic waves to an extent that permits the perception of sound.

2. (Amended) The implant of claim 1, wherein said pliant membrane forms a balloon having an acoustic impedance corresponding to an equivalent volume of at least 70% of its physical volume.

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I hereby certify under 37 CFR §1.8(a) that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage on the date indicated below and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.

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